

**MISSOULA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE MINUTES
MONDAY, MARCH 10, 2008
12:00 P.M. – ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, ROOM 24
215 S. 6TH ST. W.**

Trustees attending: Bixler Hemphill, Hirning, Rehbein, Sadler, Toth

Others attending: Arthur, Becker, Gaskill, Hainline, Lubansky, Ritter, Sorenson,
other interested staff and community members

Toth called the meeting to order. Everyone introduced themselves.

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI) UPDATE

Lubansky - RtI is referenced in ESEA and IDEA. Training in RtI is going on throughout the nation. We can all learn from other school districts. Montana has just published its RtI implementation plan. We have a district team as well as individual building teams. We are writing the district plan to map out our implementation. This gives us a road map of where we are and where we want to go. Eventually, we will want to develop an RtI policy at the Board level, which will include how students are identified, how to communicate with parents, and where is the intersection with Special Education. We will do some specific training with the Fine Arts and Library Media Specialists. Principals will need to be cognizant of in-building training. Each building team must include the principal and at least two general education teachers. This team takes the information and training back to all building staff to include Fine Arts teachers and librarians. Building level teams do a lot of deep conversation, looking at data and problem-solving. We have a district-wide training schedule. We'll integrate district and building level plans. We'll need to plan to train new staff as they come on board. Teams and teachers already work really hard at the building level. RtI won't add work; it will mean doing the work differently in reading, math, and eventually behavior.

Sadler-what are we trying to accomplish? Lubansky-we are trying to accomplish very functional core and basic reading, math, and behavioral skills for all students. All staff members are responsible for all students. We look very closely at data for all students. The curriculum that we have adopted fits wonderfully with RtI. Our core curriculum addresses the elements that are required in a co-curricular approach. The support materials that we have purchased incorporate this approach. They use the familiar RtI vocabulary. This helps students at all skill levels. Teachers can more readily see what the priority is for each student.

Rehbein-teachers tell trustees that they don't have enough time to cover what they need to teach, how can they implement RtI without taking time away from instruction? Lubansky-the feds require that each district establish their policy about using an RtI model. After we have tried intensive interventions over time, then we can ask if Special Education services are appropriate for a student. The program will be fully implemented in three years. The high schools will come on board within that time frame. Middle/high school teachers feel that we still need to teach reading at those levels.

Rehbein-Fine Arts teachers are afraid that they are being required to teach reading when they don't know how to do it. Lubansky-principals need to have the conversation within their buildings to talk about what we're trying to achieve with RtI. Some of the supplemental, strategic and intensive materials are very scripted and with appropriate training are fully implementable by other staff members. It was suggested by librarians to include retired teachers to help with this program.

Rehbein-some teachers have said that the gifted kids are being left behind. Lubansky-the adopted materials have supportive materials to work with advanced students. The goal is to get the student on the trajectory and keep him there. Teachers would like to have grade level meetings to discuss the program, what is working, what isn't working, and exchange ideas. Becker-we're examining all ways to support teachers and get them more time.

Ritter-the word core is confusing to some people. Fine Arts teachers are concerned that they will lose teaching time. There is give and take; they also need to coordinate so that others can have sufficient teaching time.

Lubansky-librarians teach and reinforce reading. Hainline-we are working on the library curriculum, this will be good to incorporate into the curriculum. Full time librarians do teach reading but they also run the entire library program in their buildings.

Hemphill-has concerns about the national debate. There are valid points on both sides. The concept of the whole child is important in Missoula. Would be nervous about anything that would take time away from other curriculum that teaches students. How enjoyable school is really affects each student's perception of school. The various curricula may be a student's chance to shine not just in reading or math. Gets nervous when our buildings look different in the implementation throughout three years. Would hate to see only some schools having more contact time or stressing certain curricula over others. Lubansky-school satisfaction has to do with being academically competent. Grade school students who are dissatisfied with school are more likely to drop out during high school. This is also about retention. By increasing student skills in core-reading and math, we help students access the other curricula. We should probably use the word "basic" rather than "core" skills. Sorenson-core means building a solid foundation that would give students their grade-level skills. We're trying to build more continuity across the district as to what that core would be. So that 3rd grade at one school looks very similar to how it looks across town. Supplemental services could look different.

Rehbein-would like to hear more from Becker as to what the district is doing to give teachers more time. Is very, very concerned to have teachers take on more. Becker-RtI should consolidate things and provide focus for the buildings. We're still in the initial stages of RtI. The buildings that haven't been part of the initial training are still having these common discussions across the district. We are hoping to gain more consistency across the district with RtI. We're looking at revisions to the calendar and at the way that specialists are divided across the district as ways to provide more instructional time for teachers.

Direction: This was a discussion/information item.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE HEALTH & WELLNESS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Gaskill-gathered data from MCPS and Frenchtown. Kelly Rice from the Health Department put together the Attitudes survey. Laura Mohar directed the activity monitoring. So far, they have monitored 532 students balanced across gender and the grade levels. National Health Guidelines show that youth should get about 60 minutes of moderate (brisk walk) to vigorous (jogging) physical activity per day, 5 days or more per week. National Fitness Guidelines show that youth should get about 20 minutes or more a day of vigorous activity. The survey looked at activity during and outside of the school day. There is evidence that better health and fitness decreases absenteeism and increases student scores. Students/parents think that they are more active than the data shows. The perception problem suggests the need for education of the parents/students. Changing behaviors is a struggle, but the benefits are apparent. One of the high risk groups are kids with low grade point averages and low physical activity (probably low self-esteem also). Another high risk group is high school girls with no physical activity at all. If we educate parents it should have a dramatic impact. Inactive kids are at huge risk for chronic diseases later in life. We also need to educate school staff and administration with these results.

Arthur-were any correlations done between this research and our Fitness Gram data?
Gaskill-no, but correlation doesn't prove cause and effect. There are a lot of ways to engage kids in physical activity during school without taking away from academic time. If we added 2 minutes of physical activity every hour during 16 waking hours, almost everyone would meet Health Guidelines.

Rehbein-appreciates the "How Can We Improve?" suggestions. Thinks that it is important to offer more PE activity in the elementary years, but the data presented here shows the opposite. Gaskill-data shows that kids move more during recess than PE. The district should focus more on middle school and high school physical education.

Rehbein-students have reported that high school PE is a joke and that they don't go and don't complete the requirements on time. They say that teachers then don't make them do what is required and so it doesn't have a positive effect.

Hemphill-due to budget constraints one of the suggestions has been to reduce the Health Enhancement requirements at the high school from two years to one. Would like to know if the drop in physical activity comes when there is no PE requirement between grades 9-10 and 11-12. Arthur-the high school curriculum has moved toward a lifetime activity approach rather than focusing on major sports. It has been implemented to a greater or lesser degree at each building. Gaskill-the high school students filled out the survey themselves whereas adults filled out the information for the K-8 grades.

Hirning-feels it is a parent issue. Doesn't know what more school districts can do.

Toth-these are tough social issues. It is a noble goal to be all things to all children.

Gaskill-is a big advocate for a public health campaign to educate people on these long term health issues.

Hemphill-appreciates the work. Doesn't think that it is a curricular issues-feels the MCPS curriculum is really sound and strong. Thinks that the principals need to have this data to work on the implementation.

Gaskill-would like to talk to principals, PTAs, etc. to get the word out. TV/Video screen time is a public health problem. Encourages the district not to drop the second year of PE, but figure out a way to get kids to want to go to that class.

Sadler-how much physical activity time is being delivered in our high school PE classes? The principal needs to ask that question and the Assistant Superintendent needs to make sure it is being done.

Greg Oliver-wants high school students to be more active. We don't really care where they're active: in or out of school. The key thing is to encourage them to find something that they are interested in and get those minutes in. 10 minutes of walking is valuable. There are lots of different easy ways to get active. Perhaps parents/students could trade screen time for physical activity. Mental health is a short-term benefit of physical activity that we can encourage.

Strategies like this may help motivate people.

Rehbein-would like a hand-out with these types of tips to share with parents, perhaps a paragraph in the building newsletters.

Direction: This was a discussion/information item.

REVIEW FEBRUARY 4, 2008 C&I COMMITTEE MINUTES

Minutes accepted as is.

Direction: This was an information only item.

COMMENTS

Public

None.

Board

None.

Superintendent

None.

Direction: This was an information only item.

OTHER

The April C&I Committee meeting will be held on April 7, 2008, at 12:00 p.m., in Room 14 of the Administration Building.

As recording secretary for this Board Committee meeting, I certify these minutes to be a true and correct copy of what was taken at the meeting, _____, Polly McNeal.

Joe Toth, Committee Chair

Gail Becker, Assistant Superintendent